



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION III  
1650 Arch Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

ORIGINAL  
(Red)

Office of Superfund  
Peter Gold

Mail Code 3HS33  
215-566-5236

July 10, 1998

Mr. Bill Skwersky  
Department of Housing and Urban Development  
100 Penn Square East  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Mr. Skwersky:

As you are well aware of, the EPA has been conducting site assessment activities at the Schuylkill Falls Public Housing Project. On May 04, 1998, soil samples were taken by the EPA from the Schuylkill Falls Public Housing Site in Philadelphia, and analyzed for Volatile Organic Compounds and Metals. The samples were taken in response to a citizen's letter regarding past industrial disposal methods at the site. From the 1800s to 1940s, the site housed various pharmaceutical manufacturing operations. In 1953, the site was redeveloped for its current use as a public housing site. The USEPA has not reviewed past disposal information on the site, other than what LAW environmental prepared in their Phase I & II assessments.

EPA collected a total of eight surface samples from the site, at depths ranging from 0 to 2 feet. Sampling locations were determined based on past aerial photographs of the site. Soil samples 01,02, and 03 were taken from the main residential area between Earلمان and Winona Avenues. Based upon aerial photographs three surface impoundments were located at this location. Soil samples 04 and 05 were collected from the grassy area between Earلمان Avenue and Merrick Road where a high rise was demolished in 1996. Soil sample 06 was taken in the northeast corner of the site while soil sample 07 was taken just below the baseball field. Soil sample 08 was used as background and was located in an area of the site where no manufacturing practices took place (based upon aerial photographs).

Both aluminum and iron were detected above Risk Based Concentration (For further information on RBC please see attachment #1) levels in all samples. Arsenic, chromium (ss01), lead (ss07), manganese, and vanadium were all found above the RBCs. However, other than the lead and manganese in ss07, all concentrations were consistent with background. It is possible that ss07's elevated lead concentrations is from automotive traffic on Merrick Road. There were no concentrations above the EPA's emergency removal guidelines.

The USEPA does not intend to take further Federal Superfund actions at the site at this time. However, because the EPA does not know the full range of possible contaminants below the surface and has no sub surface samples we can not determine if the site is clean. Therefore, we recommend that dust control, soil sampling, and confirmatory air sampling for total dust and metals be practiced during demolition and excavation at the site. The soil samples from the excavation activities should act as an indicator if there are any elevated levels of hazardous substances below the surface. The EPA feels this is necessary because our sampling went to a depth of only two feet. Further study may be necessary if elevated levels of hazardous materials are found during excavation. If additional evidence or sampling results show elevated concentrations of hazardous substances above the background from previous sampling

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(attachment #2) please contact me at 215-814-5236. We also encourage that you keep PADEP's Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act (HSCA) section at 610-832-5967 informed of all site activities. PADEP's address is Lee Park, Suite 6010, 555 North Lane, Conshohocken, PA 19428.

Sincerely,  
  
Peter Gold  
Assistant Site Assessment Manager

cc: D.K. Johnston, Philadelphia Housing Authority  
George Danyliw, PADEP I

Attachments